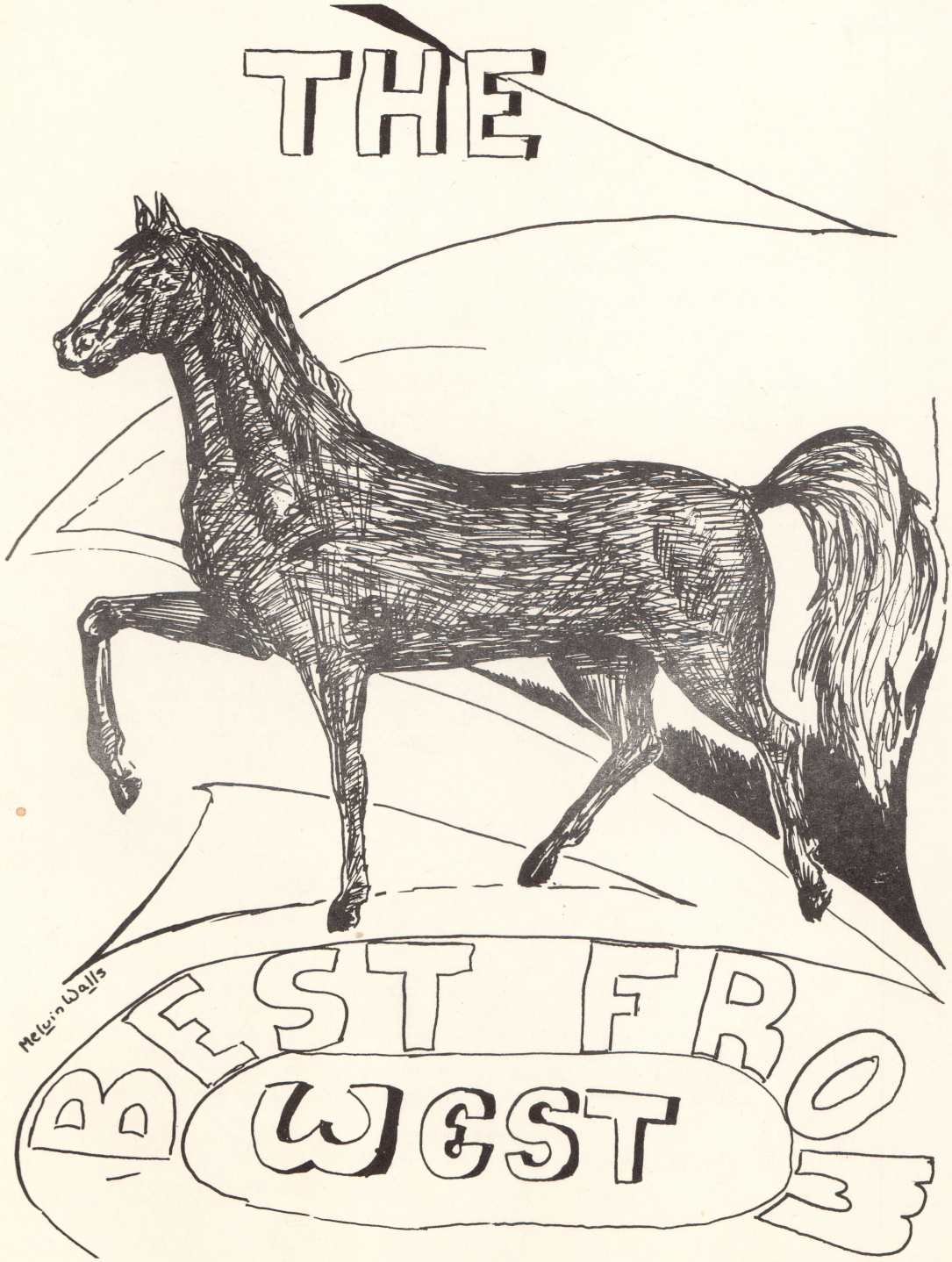
THE
BEST FROM
WEST
Melvin Walls

C O N T E N T S

Operation Boyfriend	Tina Bjornstad	page 1
Changes	Nancy Wiedman	page 4
Last Adventure	Gary Allen	page 5
A Summer Dance	Kenny Williams	page 8
Never Again !	Karen Peebles	page 9
The Donkey	Judy Hawley	page 10
Football Hero	Tom Ardis	page 11
An Experience with Abstract Painting	Linda Keeler	page 13
My Favorite Boat Trip . . .	Nadine Miller	page 14
Our Defense System	Dennis Caldwell	page 15

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On January 4, 1961, members of the West Junior High School English Department selected fifteen semi-finalists from eighty-six entries in a first school writing contest. Ten school, grade, and honorable mention awards were chosen the next day by Mrs. Janette Horst and Miss Hedy Jacobs, English teachers at Ypsilanti High School, and Mr. Charles Frank, English instructor at the University of Michigan.

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THE BEST OF WEST - published February, 1961

O P E R A T I O N B O Y F R I E N D

(First Place Award)

Tina Bjornstad

"But what if it doesn't work?"

"It will! It can't miss. Men are so naive he won't even know what hit him."

"Whee! I can hardly wait!"

Pat's confidence diverted me from my original fears.

I first noticed Kenny the day he gave an oral report in front of our eighth grade science class on hardening of the arteries. I found myself hanging on every word when he explained that arteriosclerosis is the cause of nephritis and apoplexy. I watched his big brown eyes move around the class, and my heart stopped beating when they stopped at me. My mind had me sitting beside him on a covered wagon, his face set in solemn determination. He was telling me not to fear, he would protect me from the perils of the West.

My eyes followed him to his seat and stayed there until Mr. John's booming voice broke the silence. "Miss Janet Ellen Hanson! Do me the honor of presenting me with your attention!"

I did.

That night, as on every night, Pat and I met at the school's middle entrance to begin the trip home. (Samson Junior High had three entrances.)

Pat really looked funny all bundled up in her heaviest winter coat, a big wool scarf and mittens, and boots I'm sure her father could wear. She seemed to be carrying enough books to fill a good-sized library. Even all this could not lessen the beautiful softness of her red hair that came flowing out of the heavy wool scarf and her flashy, sparkling blue eyes that revealed her vivid personality.

"I'm not ever going to get married," I solemnly confessed.

"What!" Pat's sudden exuberance scared me half to death.

After getting partially over the momentary shock, Pat was able to say somewhat calmly, "Explain, please."

"Well, when you love a man and he doesn't even know you exist, life just isn't worth living anymore, is it?"

"Now just wait a minute. Who, since when, and why?"

"Kenny Sheridan, since science class, and because of his report on the hardening of the arteries."

"I know it would be ridiculous to ask what that last item had to do with it so I shall extend my interrogation into new territory. Why do you think it's hopeless?"

"Oh, you know how it is. What can a woman do? She must wait for the man."

"Honey, it's high time you learned how things really stand. Men don't know it, but it's the woman who does all the promoting. She starts the wheels turning, and don't let anyone tell you otherwise."

"Really? But how does she do it?"

"Oh, she's real crafty. Being subtle is the secret. She just sort of sneaks up on him when he's not looking and taps him on the

shoulder until he turns around. Then she pretends she's busy and completely ignores him. He'll become curious and talk to her. When they're married he'll say he started the whole thing. Get the picture?"

"Yeah," I breathed craftily." How shall I start?"

The wheels were in motion. It took us three days to set up a complete blueprint of our plan. As zero hour approached I became more and more frightened, but Pat eased my tension.

In planning, she asked me to find out as many of Kenny's interests as possible so we could work with them. I came up with these: the Canadian Mounted Police, farming, Spanish folk songs, geese, and the Russian Revolution.

As Pat read over the list slowly, her eyes stopped at "geese" and assumed a strange and incomprehensible expression.

"What is it?", I inquired. "Got an idea?"

"Your aunt raises geese, doesn't she? Think you could rent one for a day?"

"Sure."

Two days later and my hour was almost at hand. My heart was pounding as I lurched into school under the weight of an eight pound box almost as big as myself. I was subject to stares and giggles all the way down the hall whenever my cloaked box would give forth with a very conspicuous "HONK."

As soon as I had gone to my locker, I rushed to science class with Elmer. Mr. John was very nice to let me leave him in his closet until fifth hour when he said I could give a talk on geese to the class.

The hours dragged. Flashes of regret haunted me as I wondered about "his" reaction.

Minutes before the bell rang to signal the beginning of fifth hour, I slipped into my seat and sat there nervously wringing my hands. I watched Ken glide into the room and saw his tall self-assured form assume the usual classroom position at his seat which in his case was a more or less very becoming slouch.

My nerves jangled when one of my classmates screeched his desk a few feet to a more desirable position. I also thought it very annoying when a chart on the wall flapped from the wind until I wanted to go up and kick it.

Twice during roll call a distinct but muffled "HONK" was heard. I sank guiltily down into my seat as the kids inquisitively looked around the room.

As the last name was called, Mr. John mumbled something about the room being stuffy and went to open the door.

"I have a little surprise for you today," boomed Mr. John. "A goose." Over he walked to the closet and out came Elmer, honking wildly.

The class roared. I was ready then and there to disown Pat as my best friend.

"Janet, come up here and tell us about him," invited my teacher.

My heart was in my mouth as I walked up the aisle wondering where I could run away to or if there were a military school for girls in this country.

I couldn't help staring at Kenny every so often to see if I could interpret his reaction to my explanation of where geese first came from and what they eat.

When I was right in the middle

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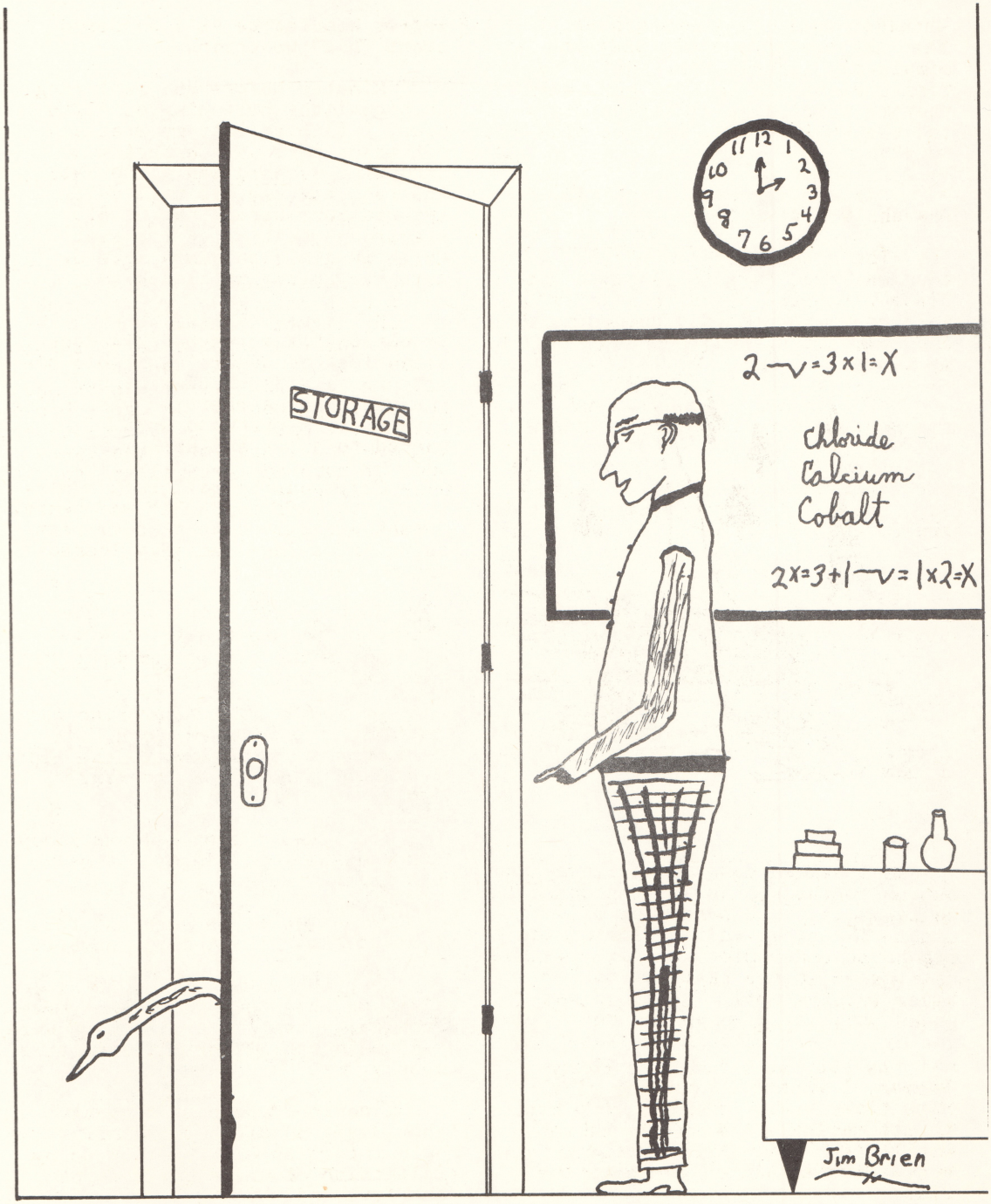
STORAGE
2 — V = 3 x 1 = X
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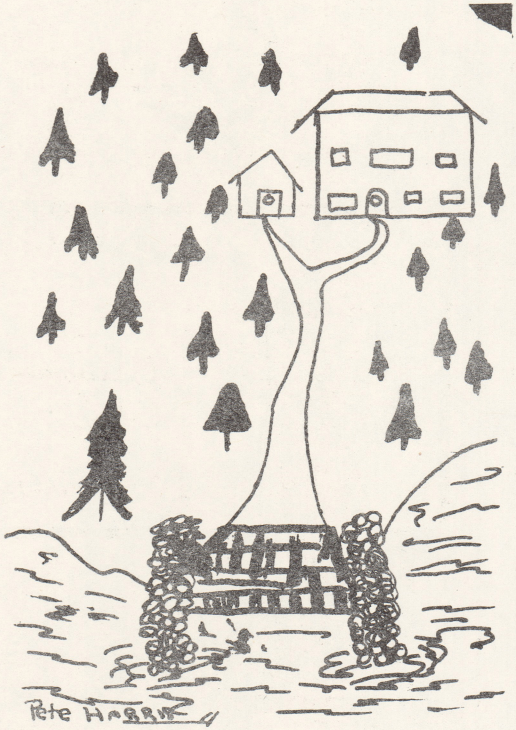
Cobalt
2X = 3 + 1 — V = 1 x 2 = X
Jim Brien

C H A N G E S

Nancy Wiedman



As I walked down the driveway and out on to the weather-beaten dock, I could smell the strong odor of dead fish. The clean white color of the big house contrasted greatly with the calm green waters that got darker and bluer farther out. The shock was great as I lay down on the dock and ran my fingers through the water. It was so cold it felt just like ice cubes. I rolled over on my back and shut my eyes, hearing the soft slap of the waves on the cement wall up on shore, and the shrill, high call of the seagulls as they caught fish.

Now all is changed. As I walk down the driveway, I have to wade through two feet of snow. There is not any dock now, and the lake is a thick sheet of ice. Now everything is white except for the dark green trees with lace made from the snow resting lightly on their branches. I can hear the joyous, happy shouts of my friends skating on the ice. I scoop up a handful of new snow and put it in my mouth. It tastes cold and almost bitter. I walk on toward the ice and I can smell the sweet odor of roasted marshmallows cooking over a fire.

L A S T A D V E N T U R E

Gary Allen

A white, billowing cloud rises above the scaffolding on the dark, starlit night as Astra IV takes off for the planet Jupiter. The white heat of the blast is stopped by the concrete walls of the blockhouse where many scientists, confronted by weird-looking machines making strange noises, and with lights blinking on and off, wait anxiously to see if the rocket will go off successfully. It is not just a matter of whether the rocket ship will go off well or whether it will crash, costing the government a few million dollars, but it is a matter of life or death. The year is 1975 and mice and monkeys are no longer sent up in rockets. There are three men in Astra IV and project Jupiter is under way.

For these men on the Astra IV, operation Jupiter is a fulfillment of a life-long dream. For months these three men have been preparing for man's first step into space.

The captain of the expedition is Robert Meyers, an astronautical engineer and a member of the National Aeronautics Association. He's a tall man, over six feet, with a thin face and light, sandy hair.

Captain Meyers's associates on this flight are Professor Allen Kincoff, an astronomer from Mt. Wilson Observatory, and Julio Marinetti, the navigator. The short, stocky Italian with his dark, curly hair, thick eyebrows, and big brown eyes, is quite a ladies' man.

The main reason these men are going on this trip is to answer questions that have been plaguing astronomers and scientists for years. They will try to find out what the wide, parallel bands or belts, as seen through a telescope, are, and why these belts and spots upon them change and undergo considerable variations. Another important question to find the answer to is what causes a large, oval spot, about 25,000 miles long, on the surface of the planet. The spot is bright red in appearance. Besides these important questions, the men will look for traces of uranium and other ore samples, find out if there are any other types of gases in the atmosphere besides ammonia and methane, and see if the planet will support vegetations.

"We did it," screams one of the radar operators after several long minutes. "Astra IV is on her way to Jupiter."

The word is quickly spread through the blockhouse. Man is on the threshold of the universe.

On Astra IV there is not so much excitement. Every inch of the ship must be looked over to see if anything went wrong because of the takeoff. While Captain Meyers and Professor Kincoff search the plane, Julio, who is also the radio man, calls in to Cape Canaveral to check his course. It is 484 million miles from the sun to Jupiter, but the Astra IV can make the trip from the earth to Jupiter in five days.

"Everything's running perfectly" said Captain Meyers as he came forward, his lead boots holding tightly to the floor to keep him from floating away. "Any news from the Cape yet?"

"Yes, we'll go 120° until we get through the Van Allen radiation belt and then head up a course of 285° to intercept Jupiter in its orbit around the sun.

"Well, if everything's all set, let's have some breakfast," replied the ever-cheerful little professor,

whose solid grey hair had won him the nickname "Cotton."

The trip was running perfectly and five days later Astra IV was about to land on Jupiter. The landing of the Astra IV is not complicated. The ship turns from a horizontal position to a vertical position and, by the use of rockets, lowers itself to the ground.

"Prepare for landing," came the command from Captain Meyers. "Rockets on, Cotton."

"Roger, rockets on."

On the Astra IV there were special landing rockets so the main rockets were cut off. The landing rockets were on the bottom of the ship along with the main rockets and were pointed at the ground. They let out just enough force to slow up the ship. But, just seconds after the rockets were turned on, they suddenly stopped. Since the main rockets had been turned off, Astra Iv was falling like a lead balloon.

"Bob, the rocket's dropped!", cried out Cotton.

"Quick turn on the main rockets to 1/2 efficiency and use them for landing," was the reply.

The space ship landed with a dead thud and from somewhere in the cabin came a yell.

"Touchdown."

Soon the men were ready to set up shop and Professor Kincoff's telescope and other equipment was brought down. Julio was going to help the professor set up the telescope so Captain Meyers decided to explore the surrounding land. All around him were high mountains and plateaus, much higher and rougher than the ones we have on earth.

As Captain Meyers began to climb a mountain to reach the large red spot which he felt was on the other side, he suddenly came upon an area where the stones were rather smooth. Leading away from the clearing was a trail going up the mountain between jagged peaks. He decided to follow it. Progress was slow because of the heavy pressure suit he had to wear.

When he reached the top of the mountain he crouched low behind a rock, and, after a moment's hesitation, he looked over. His face suddenly turned the color of his hazel eyes, only with a little more green and sickening effect. Before him lay the Great Red Spot, as it is known by astronomers. For as far as the eye could see, there were acres upon acres of red. To Captain Meyers this red seemed to be vegetation, tall and slender like a forest. But it was not this red, long-stemmed plant life that made Captain Meyers' eyes fall back into their sockets and made his face twitch into a gruesome effect of pain, but it was the people harvesting the ten foot tall plants.

They were cutting the plants with crude stone implements. Their clothes were just animal hides, black in color, and their bodies were covered with a thick mangle of hair. Captain Meyers could see these animals from which the hides came. They were black, with four legs, the hind ones larger than the front ones. On their heads they had a long, spiral horn. These animals were beind herded into a small canyon.

The people lived in caves in the side of the mountains and were very short and stocky. They had very small beady eyes, set close together, and the thick mop of hair on their heads went clear down to their shoulders and almost covered their eyes. Their eyes were set deep in their sockets and they didn't have any nose. Their mouths were extremely large, but they had no lips so they could not speak distinctly.

As soon as he saw these people and got his senses back, Captain Meyers quickly turned and started

(continued on page 17)

Gail
Bitner

A SUMMER DANCE

(8th Grade Award)

Kenny Williams

It all started about two years ago when the L'Esprit Club was sponsoring a dance at the Park Ridge Community Center. I had just decided a couple of hours before the dance that I would go.

As I walked up the steps toward the building, my mind raced back to this morning when I decided I wasn't going. I had never danced with a girl before because I had just learned to dance. So seeing this was the first time I'd ever danced with a girl or danced in front of an audience, I was scared stiff. My mother had finally gotten enough courage in me so that I would make a go of it.

As I opened the door and walked in, I saw how people had done such a beautiful job in decorating the rooms. Red, pink, green, blue, and orange balloons were hanging from the ceiling. They also had figures representing a girl and boy, cut out of colored paper. They had a refreshment stand for people to drink punch or eat cookies during the dance. They also had a huge amount of salad mostly potato and jello.

The music had already started and the floor was packed with kids who were dancing. I let the first several numbers go by before I realized that I should be out there dancing with the rest of the kids. But still I was too scared to get out there.

As I stood there thinking, a few of my friends walked over to their girlfriends and danced with them. After that number they walked over to me and tried to persuade me to get a girl and dance with her. I was still a little reluctant.

Finally I built up enough courage in myself to ask a girl for a dance. I asked her in a mannerly

fashion and she accepted. And brother, was I scared!

When we started dancing, I thought that I would get along very well. I was concentrating on my steps and trying hard not to make a mistake.

All of a sudden I got the feeling that people were watching me. It distracted me. I sure was nervous! I was so nervous that I couldn't concentrate on my steps. My feet started fumbling and I was stepping on the girl's feet. I kept on doing this until the girl I was dancing with got so mad that she threw me away and started fussing and hollering about how funny I danced. I was really embarrassed. A big crowd had already gathered around me. They were laughing about how funny I danced. I knew they were right. I ran and got my coat and ran out of the building. I ran most of the way home.

N E V E R A G A I N

Karen Peebles

"Brrrrr!" was the only word that was heard from any of us the first few minutes on the way. The road was gravel in the summer, but now there was a thin sheet of ice and a blanket of new-fallen snow coating it, making our feet slide and slip going up the gradual incline of the road. Snow was piled up along the sides like mounds of light, puffy sugar.

It was about six p.m. and the wind was blowing more fiercely now than when we had started. There was a bright full moon floating in the black-gray sky between the twinkling stars and gray fluffy clouds. The three of us were still moving forward in spite of the weather. We had a destination to reach.

Finally we reached the edge of the golf course. The top of the first well-rounded hill we came to was a great relief. The wind had blown the top clear of the foot-deep snow. We stood there a while and just listened to the wind sweeping through the dense pine forests on one side, and the distant laughs and cheery screams coming from a faraway hill called "Hill Seventeen" by all the neighboring kids. This hill was our destination and it seemed miles away even now. "We'd better get moving if we ever want to get there in time for some sliding," I coached. So off we marched.

Hill Seventeen was only the steepest slope throughout the entire nine-hole golf course. You can stand on the edge and if you can open your eyes without getting dizzy, you look down the incline and you'll say for sure that it is straight up and down.

The little creek that runs into a small pond opposite the hill adds to the excitement when you come zooooming down the slope on a sled or jam-packed toboggan.

"Wow! That's the last time I'll ever make that long trip over here again!" sounded out Barbara the minute we reached the top of the huge hill.

"Oh sure you will, just think of the fun we're going to have now that we're here," protested Jan.

"Sure, we'll have fun! It'll be worth coming all that way. Wait and see," I said in agreement.

Just then, over the crest of the hill we went (with help, of course) No sled and not even a toboggan!

Bump! Bump! were the sounds we heard going down. Rolling into each other seemed to be a trick of ours until, "thud", we hit bottom.

We gathered ourselves up, making sure we were still in one piece. Then slowly we looked up towards the top of Seventeen and . . . laughed and laughed and laughed until we managed to stumble back up the snow-covered steps used by golfers in the summer.

Down the hill and then up the hill we went all evening. We stopped once in a while to rest and get warm by the fire some boys had made. It sure felt good.

Finally, covered with snow caked on from head to toe, snow packed in our boots, freezing cold since the fire went out, and dead tired, we said goodbye to our friends.

Off we went into the coal-black darkness of the night that had crept up on us while we were having a bang-up time on the hill. The snow drifts

(continued on page 16)

THE DONKEY

Judy Hawley

I heard a bang followed by a cracking and shattering sound. Slowly I turned my head to the dark corner, hidden from the bright rays of the sun, and there, lying broken on the floor was the odd shaped donkey made by one of the children in my room at school. I walked slowly to the shadowed corner and began picking up the pieces. The animal figure must have been laid too close to the edge of the shelf.

Poor little Billy had spent weeks working on his donkey. How proud he was from the gleam that I saw in his eyes when he brought it to my desk earlier today to show it. Now he was probably on his way home, thinking of taking his animal with him tomorrow. Tomorrow! What an awful word that was to me at this moment. I would have to tell him, but what should I say? I would have to figure out something before school the next day. Thinking in the noisy streetcar wasn't very helpful nor was thinking in my quiet little apartment much help.

If Billy found out what had happened, he would be heartbroken. It would ruin his Christmas if he didn't have his present under the tree for his family. All of the other children would have their presents for the family, but not Billy.

I got some clay and began to roll the cool moistened ball in my hand. The time must have passed awfully fast, for in a short while an odd shaped donkey was tilted lopsided on the table. It could have passed for the broken donkey's twin.

The next day, which was Friday, was a happy one. The children were so excited and anxious to get their animals to take home. On the shelf stood the lopsided donkey which never looked better to me before. The bell rang and out ran the children, anxious to get home. I felt particularly good inside and relieved. I heard a little noise and looked to see Billy outside with his nose pressed against the cold pane looking in. I went and opened the door. Billy walked in and said that he wanted me to take his donkey as a Christmas present from him. I don't know of any time that I have been happier. I know that if everyone had a Christmas like I did that year, they shall never forget it for many years to come.

F O O T B A L L H E R O

(9th Grade Award)

Tom Ardis

Jim Bradkey drove his dark blue convertible into the school parking lot and wheeled it into a space near the locker room door. He put the top up and then hopped out, carrying his football shoes stuffed with two pairs of clean socks. There was a chill in the October air. Riding in the convertible had reddened his cheeks and hands.

When he reached the door at the end of the sidewalk it was locked. He remembered that he was early and pounded on the door with his fist. His chilled knuckles suffered in the attack on the door, but he quickly forgot the pain when the custodian appeared to open the door.

"Hi, Leo," Jim said.

"Hi, Jimmy," the plump, balding janitor replied. "Aren't you kind of early?"

"Yeh, I guess so. Is it okay if I come in?"

"Sure. Come on in! Been having some trouble with the pool filter," he said as he walked through the shower room into the pool.

"Is Mr. Miller here yet, Leo?"

Leo's answer was drowned in the rush of water pouring into the pool, but Jim guessed that the coach couldn't have arrived. Jim walked past several rows of green lockers to his own and sat on the green bench to dress. In a few minutes he was pulling jersey number forty-eight over his head and tucking its blue cloth into the bright gold of his pants.

With his shoes in his hand he walked out of the locker room into the gymnasium. He climbed to the top of the bleachers which were folded against the wall, and began to wrap his ankles with a roll of cotton cloth. He wound the cloth in a figure eight pattern and bound it with adhesive.

The gym was dark since there were very few windows. The sun had set and the only light was that coming from the open door to the pool. The only sound was that of the water pouring into the pool and the muffled banging of the lockers in the next room. A few of the boys were beginning to arrive.

He slipped his socks on over the ankle wrappings and put on his low-cut shoes. Taking the long white shoe laces he carefully laced them in the intricate pattern which would keep them from being pulled off in the game.

Jim began to think about the game. It was their last of the season and his last forever because he would graduate in the spring. Would they win or lose? A win would assure them of second place in the league. Not like last year when they had been league champions, but it had been a good season in his opinion. He hoped that they could win. It would be a wonderful way to end his high school football career.

"The long trip was really worth it", Jim thought to himself as he left the field with the team at halftime and jogged toward the fieldhouse. So far this had been the most exciting game of the season. They had led by a touchdown and a field goal and were confident that they would win.

The team sat around for a while resting and relaxing in the locker room. Jim had played defense most of the first half as usual. Mr.

Miller gave his usual pep talk before the team returned to the field. Jim felt proud to be one of them.

During the third quarter there was no scoring. But, in the fourth, the other team closed the gap in the score to only three points. They missed the extra point. With less than a minute left to play, the other team scored again and took the lead. The kick was good and they led by four points.

The other team's short, high kickoff angled toward Ed Brock, the end. The lanky end had hardly caught the ball when he was hit by several of the onrushing defensive players. He looked like he was hit hard.

"Ed is touch," Jim thought to himself. It wasn't often that he lay on the ground as he did now. He must be really hurt.

Jim knew that he would take Brock's place, so he moved nearer to the coach, who was standing by the sideline. When Coach Miller shouted his name, Jim was at his side in an instant.

"One-sixteen pass, Jimmy. Get in there!"

The coach slapped him on the back and Jim ran onto the field. The crowd cheered Ed Brock while he hobbled off the field, supported by Mr. Karlson, the math teacher, and Chuck bates, the manager. Jim took his place in the huddle and said firmly to the quarterback that the coach wanted the one-sixteen pass.

The quarterback took a deep breath and said in his authoritative voice, "One-sixteen pass."

They all clapped hands simultaneously and rambled up to the ball. With only seconds to go, the ball was snapped. Jim raced down the field, jogging to the left and then to the right to deceive the defense. Angling toward the goal line, he looked over his shoulder. There

wasn't any pass; was the quarterback down? No! A long pass shot in the air as the gun went off. Jim knew that if he caught it and got across the goal line, it would still be good. The muscles bulged in his legs as he sprinted after the ball which was dropping lazily from the air. At the right instant he rallied all of his strength and gave a mighty leap, snatching the ball and drawing it to his chest. He tumbled through the air and crashed to the ground on his left side. He raised his head to the thunderous cheering and stamping of the crowd in the stands. He was in the end zone.

The lights blinded him, but he heard Coach Miller call his name.

"Jim, what are you doing here in the gym? We're almost ready to leave for the game."

AN EXPERIENCE WITH ABSTRACT PAINTING

(7th Grade Award)

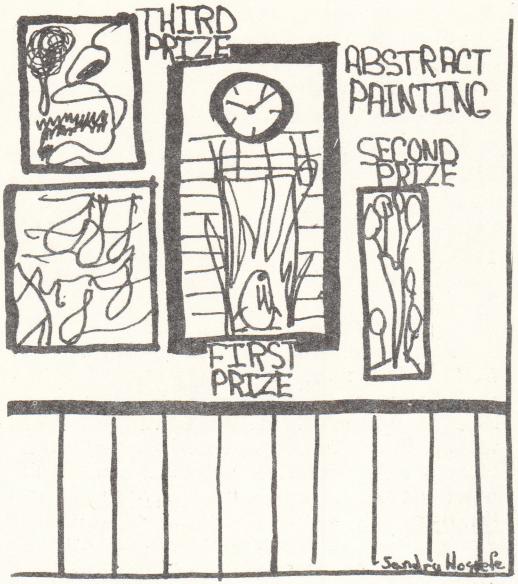
Linda Keeler

I don't really like abstract paintings because, I guess, I just don't understand them. In sixth grade we had to study them and draw some. While we did this I wondered if they meant something, so I asked the teacher. The teacher told me that they meant something to some people. Also, that people express their opinions in these drawings. When we were drawing these pictures we were to pick a name for them. When some of the people did pick names, I really don't know where they got them. The name didn't sound right for what they had drawn. The teacher said that people see one important interest in the picture and make their name on that. But some of the names are chosen because of the objects in the picture.

When you get to expressing things in pictures, I don't understand that, but it is very possible that these people who draw them do. Some people when they draw an abstract picture, think of something and draw it right away and a lot of people want to buy the painting. Also, some people just throw paint on an easel and it's an overnight success.

When someone does do an abstract painting, some people say they understand everything in the picture from the name, but I really don't believe it. This is because all I can see on a picture like this is a bunch of lines and circles. I think that some people just buy these paintings to be buying them, but I'll grant you that others think they are rather nice.

One day our teacher, Mr. Lang, told us to draw an abstract painting that was not to be just a design. Well, when we got through, the teacher put the pictures on the board



for us to look at. When I was looking them over, I wondered what he meant because they all looked like designs to me. Mr. Lang understood these paintings very well. He said you had to learn to understand them. I probably could enjoy these paintings better if I did understand them, but that is something which would be really hard for someone like me. We had a contest and some of the pictures were rather pretty. I don't mean all the lines and circles, but the colors. Some of these colors were just beautiful.

When anyone does think of an abstract painting, they think of lines like I usually do. But, just like the teacher said, they are a lot of impressions. I still say that I don't like them because I can't see the impressions in the picture.

MY FAVORITE BOAT TRIP

Nadine Miller

I think one of the nicest things that ever happened to me was a boat trip down the Tahquamenon River to Tahquamenon Falls. I was fortunate enough to have this experience this past summer.

My family spent a two weeks vacation in the Upper Peninsula. We saw and did just about everything there was to see and do, but I would like to tell you about one particular boat trip.

We had to get up quite early one morning because the boat left at 9 A.M. We drove to Hulbert, which is a little village about two miles off M-28. From there we followed signs which led about ten miles through the forest to the parking lot and boat dock. Here the Hulbert I and Hulbert II were docked. We boarded Number I. The captain told us that these boats were bought as World War II surplus. They had been used as landing craft. They were made of very strong steel and carried troops ashore from the ships. At quite an expense, these landing craft were made into regular sightseeing boats. They looked like the old fashioned riverboats, except they were run by diesel motors instead of paddle wheels.

The Tahquamenon River flows through the forest. The water is quite red because of the iron and minerals in this region. Soon one gets to like red water just as much as clear water. The beautiful green trees, the lovely blue sky, and the boat sailing so peacefully, all blend in to give one the feeling of quiet splendor. The captain told us it was here Walt Disney filmed much of the scenery and setting for his film, "Bambi", and I can see why. In some places the river is shallow and we had to go slower.

The deer are used to seeing the boats and do not run away. We saw quite a few. We also saw many beaver dams and houses. The guide was very clear in his explanation of how the beavers work. He told us that sometimes bear are seen, but we weren't lucky enough to see one.

Farther on down the river the boat went very slowly and we were shown an American bald eagle nest way up in the top of one of the tallest trees. And sure enough, the eagle was perched on a limb near the nest. I took a picture of this sight and was fortunate enough to have it turn out very good. This species of eagle is getting very scarce.

The forest around us was getting quite thick. All of it is privately owned by wealthy people. Some have built hunting cabins near the river. The only way they can get to their cabins is up the river by motor boat. They come up for deer season and perhaps one week during the summer. We saw one cabin which had collapsed because of heavy snow during the winter.

We rode through this beautiful scenery for about an hour and a half, then we docked and had to walk through the forest to the Falls.

Rock is all around the Falls. We weren't able to get too close. At the top of the Falls the red water falls and churns so it made foam that reminded us of root beer. We could spend as much time roaming around here as we wanted. The guide cautioned everyone not to get lost because it might be a long time before we were found, but everyone got back on the boat. I think he counted noses as we got off.

Then we went back again along the same trail. We were able to buy

(continued on page 17)

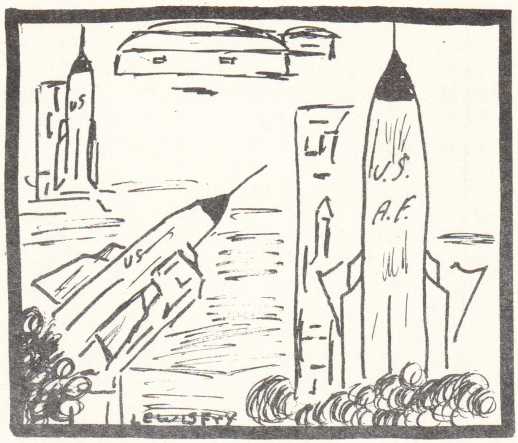
O U R D E F E N S E S Y S T E M

Dennis Caldwell

Many people say that our defense system is (1) weak, (2) not progressing, and (3) not putting all our equipment into use. I do not feel this way. I will tell my feelings, using Air Force statistics:

1. People claim our defense system is weak in manpower and in equipment. It is not. We have jets which either have held or now hold every type of record. Strategic Air Command (SAC) has bombers such as the B-52, which can reach any spot on the globe, non-stop and back in very fast time. The B 58 is a four jet engined, 1200 MPH intercontinental bomber which can carry nuclear bombs, as can the B-52. Now in the development stage is the B-70 "Valkyrie" which can carry many types of bombs at very high altitudes at speeds over 2,000 MPH. We have the F-106 jet fighter which can blast anything out of the sky with only one of its several "Falcon" or "Genie" missiles at very high speeds. Planes such as the F-100, F-101, F-102A, F-104C, and F-105 have many things about them classified as "Military Secrets." So we are weak with some 20,823 airplanes?

2. People say our defense is not progressing. Since 1950, when we had a piddling force of B-36 global bombers supported by the thin crust of fighters left over from World War II, we have built up our Air Force with hundreds of fighters, and hundreds of support aircraft. We have established the DEW (Distant Early Warning) line in the arctic regions where it is fit for neither man nor beast to live, to give us an early warning of attacking aircraft; the Mid-Canada line has the same function except it runs through a course following the 55th parallel; and the Pinetree line, situated along the



Canada- United States border also has the same function. We have radar towers off the coast of Texas to warn us of attacking planes from the south. Rocket and jet planes are always doing research work for information for the future Air Force. So we are not progressing?

3. People say we are not putting all of our equipment into use. They do not understand reports. The U. S. Air Force is discharging some of its personnel because in this day and age of "push-button warfare," less men are needed to operate and maintain equipment. One man today can operate machines which would take several men to operate a few years ago. All our equipment cannot be used all at once because it would cost taxpayers more money, and then the taxpayers would complain because of high taxes. If we did use them a great deal more, fuel which is refined from one of our natural resources would become exhausted faster. So we are not using our equipment to full capacity?

Ignorance of people to facts is a great enemy to mankind.

of saying that they were truly vegetarians, the entire class broke into a hysterical laugh except Mr. John and Kenny. I frantically tried to remember what I could have said to bring on this outburst. My mind went blank and I thought I was going to faint when a white streak whished past me and out the door. My face turned seven shades redder than the bright red ribbon in my hair.

The world had come to an end and my life was ruined. The picture of me sitting outside a cave in the Tibetan Mountains knitting just for the sake of wasting the final years of my life was knocked completely out of my head by Mr. John's excited roar, "Run after him! Don't just stand there!"

I've never run so fast in my whole life. Feathers were everywhere; I could even taste them. Kids came screaming out of their rooms, knocking each other down. Futile grabs were made at Elmer.He was too fast for us.

At last I heard a teacher scream amid the chaos, "Call the fire department, he's landed on the rafters."

The afternoon was shot and it was my fault. I knew I'd get a lecture from the principal, but I certainly deserved it.

I cried all the way home without a word to Pat whom I hadn't seen since lunch and whom I didn't intend to see. Up the stairs I ran to my room. There I recalled, amid my tears, how I'd made a complete fool of myself in front of Kenny and I wondered what was the best method of suicide.

My mother hollered up the stairs to me, "Janet, telephone."

Feebly I lurched to the phone.

"Hello?" I tried to sound as normal as possible.

"Hello, Janet?"

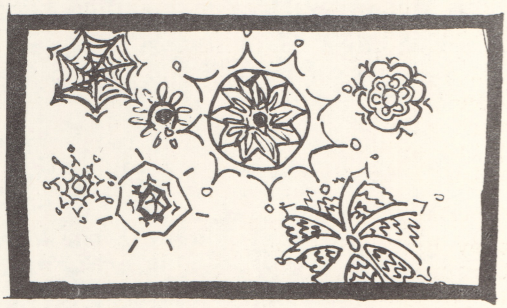
"Yes." The sound of a boy's voice excited me.

"This is Kenny. I know you feel terrible about what happened today, but you certainly shouldn't. I had no idea you were interested in geese. Isn't it funny, but I am too. I've been wanting to call you and ask you to go to the show with me, but I thought you'd refuse. Now I can ask you over to my house to see my geese. Will you? Next Saturday?"

I was speechless.

"Hello? Janet? Are you there?"

"Uh, yeah. YEAH! I'd love to!"



were not few and far between, and they came more than just to our knees. We took what we thought would be a faster way home.

Stumbling into the house, we were hit with a warm blast of air that hit us like soft pillows. Quickly, oh so quickly, our wet, cold clothes came off. "Like lightning", said Mom.

Then it was upstairs and into the kitchen where we could smell the heavenly-sweet, warm smell of hot cocoa that was waiting for us. As we sat there sipping hot cocoa and talking about the fun we had had that night and about the cold walk we had had, we said, "Never again." But I wonder what next year will bring?

LAST ADVENTURE (continued)

back toward the rocket ship to warn Julio and Professor Kincoff. He was too late. Julio and Cotton were surrounded by three men carrying clubs and staring at the rocket ship. When Captain Meyers saw them he hid behind the telescope, but they had already spotted him. As two of them ran toward him, swinging clubs, he looked for something to throw. At his feet he found a flashlight. He picked it up, but as he did so, he hit the switch and as he started throwing it at them, they suddenly stopped. As soon as they saw the light they ran off!

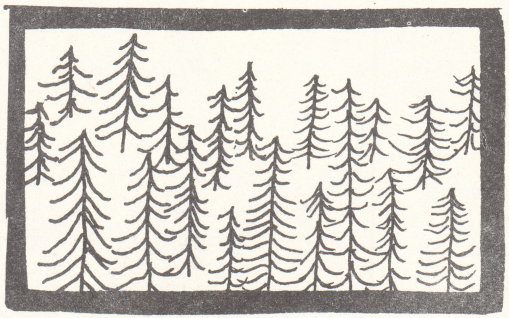
Captain Meyers soon figured out why. There was little light on the planet because of the thick ammonia and methane atmosphere. The people lived in dark caves. Their eyes were small, deep set, and their thick hair almost covered them. It was quite evident that the light was painful to them.

"Let's get out of here before they bring back help," yelled Cotton through the space suit's intercom as he scrambled up the ladder to get in the ship.

Once in the ship they discovered that their problems were not yet over. Because they had used their main rockets in the landing, they might not have enough thrust to get off the planet. There was no way to be sure if they could get off the planet or not. There was nothing to do except to try to take off. The natives had now reached the space ship and were battering the Astra IV with their clubs.

"Here goes everything," said Captain Meyers as he started the engines.

Tomorrow you can rise from a good night's rest and be fresh for the day. You can look out your bedroom window and hear the birds singing. The flowers are in bloom. The grass is green and you can see the dew sparkle in the sunlight. The sun is shining brightly through the window and it warms the flesh on your face. You can look forward to this day, to tomorrow, and to your future. But to the men on the Astra IV, there is no tomorrow or the day after, and their future is as black and as dark as the caves in the mountain. Because of lack of power, Astra IV isn't coming home.



MY FAVORITE BOAT TRIP (continued)

soft drinks and sandwiches on the way back. There was a little galley on the boat also. On the way back we saw no deer, for it was getting near noon and they always go farther into the forest.

The entire trip took four and a half hours. Nobody was tired. It was too interesting and enjoyable.